3: Roberts S-4 (no date)1951 EDl Rumania EDl

and the investigators found many of the old labor contracts and obligations associated with pre-1914 Rumania.

Unable to support themselves in the community, many peasants were seeking temporary work in nearby market towns, and a number traveled as far as Bucarest, a distance of about 70 kilometers. The exodus in most cases was not permanent, and the peasants after earning some money returned to Dâmbovnicul. This movement to the city was a reflection of the new conditions, which were also seen in the houses and garments of the peasants: houses were no longer built to last generations as was the case in the more isolated districts to the north; the national costume was relegated to Sundays. Birth and death rates were high and the natural increase outran the emigration away from the plasă. The standard of living was very low; many families were undernourished.

A definite differentiation in the peasantry was developing. A few peasants—mostly those who had inherited medium properties—were enlarging their holdings; a few new peasant estates of over 100 hectares had been created. The poorer peasants, including many who had been allotted land, were losing their holdings. Investigations into debts and credit showed that even after the conversion of 1934 about half the households were in debt. Credit provided by the cooperative banks went almost entirely to the larger peasants; in one commune holdings of up to 5 hectares received only 7.9 per cent of the loans. The special political interest shown by the parties in the judeţ of Argeş seemed to have brought no benefits beyond permitting local party stalwarts to obtain extra funds to purchase land from peasants who were in debt or in need of money.

Such, then, was the land of happy peasants with their colorful folkways so picturesquely displayed in the travel literature of the Carolist era.

563 would obtain equal grants, while officials would be nomin-
668 ated proportionately to the numbers of each nationality.

Count Bethlen, however, desired to justify the millions spent on the revisionist campaign and demanded the revision of frontiers, namely the retrocession of the Hungarian towns bordering on the frontier (Arad, Oradea-Mare, and Satu Mare). The advisers of King Carol considered that the present frontiers of Rumania were final, and in order that the idea of a personal union be rendered acceptable to the Rumanian people, all reference to a revision of frontiers should be dropped as it was sure to provoke a fiasco, all the more so since the Liberal party was known to be hostile to the idea of a personal union. The Rumanians would accept the scheme only in case Hungary agreed to recognize the actual frontiers without rectification and in exchange for the other concessions. It was on this point that the negotiations came to a standstill. Count Bethlen was bound by engagements towards the revisionist group. According to his conception, only Transylvania was to remain under Rumanian rule as a Duchy, while other parts were to revert to Hungary."

In conclusion the paper stated that "the interview left painful recollections with Count Bethlen who now talks of an alliance with Italy and Austria."

The Dobrudja.

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647 If the state of the minorities in Transylvania may be stated to be relatively satisfactory, taking into consideration the general shortcomings of the Rumanian administrative system, it is to be regretted that as much cannot be said of the Dobrudja, where both the Turkish and Bulgarian minorities, living in compact masses, have well-founded grievances. One of the main causes of dissatisfaction has been the ill-considered plan of the Rumanian Government to colonize southern Dobrudja with Kutso-Vlachs from Macedonia. Without making any adequate preparations to provide these people with dwellings, food and clothing, it proceeded to billet them in the small cottages of the Bulgarian and Turkish farmers which were barely sufficient for their owners. The newcomers being destitute, had no alternative to that of

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a life of rapine, a matter which led to bloody encounters followed by mass arrests of the local population. The latter had been further embittered by the State seizing one-third of their lands, no compensation whatever being given, even in cases of these lands carrying growing crops. Such was the tension that had been created that on the advent of the Maniu government, both M. M. Vaida-Voevod and Mihalache considered it imperative to intervene in order to put a stop to the abuses and the provocations that both Turks and Bulgarians were subjected to. The intercession of the leaders of the National Peasant Party caused extreme ill-feeling in Chauvinist circles which fomented a violent agitation against what was represented as treachery to the Rumanians. This culminated in the assassination of an under-secretary of State by a hot-headed student. The Maniu government had delegated a commission to study on the spot the complaints of the population of the Dobrudja and prepare a report, a summary of which was published in the "Adeverul" of March 4th, 1929. In this we read that "the enterprise of colonizing the Dobrudja had been left without control and had become a means of exploitation and the furthering of personal interests," that the system of quartering the colonists on the Bulgarian and Turkish inhabitants "led to an unbearable state of affairs causing endless conflicts." As for the situation of the colonists, the report shows that the ineptitude of the Rumanian authorities transcends all imagination, "out of 10,000 heads of families only 15 had received monetary help from the government, the lands that were to be allotted to the colonists remained in possession of State functionaries. The colonists had no houses nor timber wherewith to construct them." As a consequence of this report the Maniu Government created a special commissariat for building houses for the colonists, 1,257 of which were built in 1929, 938 during 1930, and 1,200 in the course of 1931, at an average cost of 44,000 lei each.

The situation, unfortunately has not improved, and murders of Turks and Bulgarians by the Kutso-Vlachs are frequent. What is most regrettable is that they are left practically unpunished, as has been the case with the murderer of one of the leaders of the Bulgarian minority, the

RUMANIA

[166] late C. M. Stephanov, who was also a member of the 657 Rumanian Senate. The main cause of the effervescence that 563 still subsists is this ill-advised scheme of planting the destitute [647] Kutso-Vlachs on the farms of the aboriginal inhabitants, proof of which has been given by M. Georoceanu in a booklet he has published. M. Georoceanu was formerly a member of the Rumanian Senate during M. Maniu's tenure of office.

It may be added that the Bulgarians complain of not [658] having a single school in their villages, and that when they presented petitions for opening such their signatories had [659] been prosecuted. Bulgarian priests are no longer allowed to be nominated, and those that still remain are being gradually replaced by Rumanians who officiate naturally in their own language which is not understood by their flocks. A lesser [204] wrong which receives the condemnation only of the intellectuals, is the ban on Bulgarian newspapers and periodicals. Their introduction into Rumania is prohibited, and though a few months ago the Bucarest press announced that this embargo would be raised, yet as late as April, 1932 the police authorities in the Dobrudja had received no intimation of this commendable measure. It is obvious that all these 563 grievances could easily be removed with a little goodwill on 648 the part of the Rumanian government, and to the westerner 657 it is incomprehensible that the latter should make no effort to safeguard the happiness of hundreds of thousands of human beings whose destiny has been entrusted to its hands. For it is not only the elementary duty of a government to care for its subjects, but in this case even political reasons dictate the following of a more humane and civilized policy. The bulk of the population being Bulgarian, and having for forty years enjoyed an independent existence, is utterly unaccustomed to such maladministration as it is now experiencing. It is therefore natural that it should be soliciting the intercession of the Bulgarian government under whose suzerainty it lived until recently. This is a course that creates friction between the two governments, keeps open an old sore, and embitters and strains relations between Bulgaria and Rumania. The former country would incur every sacrifice in order to ensure Rumania's friendship, and